

Her Way, Part 2

by Karen8

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Summary: With the help of a holodeck character, Riker and Troi plot to bring the Captain and CMO together.

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By Karen Foy

Author's Note: The character Vic Fontaine comes from the DS9 episode "His

Way". He was played there by actor James Darren.

Timeline - This takes place after Insurrection, but before the season finale

of DS9.

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Trek. I merely claim this story.

Picard sat in his ready room without a clue as to the conspiracy that was

forming on his ship. It had been a fairly routine day and he was just

finishing some reports when the chime on the door sounded.

"Come," he answered as the door opened and Riker entered the

room.

"What can I do for you Number One?" he said, laying a pad on the desk

wearily.

"I can come back if you're busy, Sir."

"No, not at all, Number One. I was just about finished for the day. What's

on your mind."

"Well, Sir, I was wondering if you would join Deanna and I for a late dinner

tonight with some friends on the holodeck."

Picard thought for a moment. Riker almost never asked him to dine with him,

especially if he were having dinner with the Counselor. He must have

something important on his mind. The thought roused Picard's curiosity.

"A special occasion, Will?" he asked, raising an eyebrow slightly.

"No, no," Riker stammered, trying not to make Picard suspicious of the

invitation, but yet keep him interested. "We'd just like your opinion about

something."

Picard eyed his first officer. Riker appeared uneasy about something, but

he decided not to push the issue. After all, what harm could there be in

dinner?

"I'd be delighted, Will. What time?"

Riker smiled. It had worked. "I think Deanna said everything would be

ready by 21:00 hours." He paused for just a second for effect. "On second

thought, better make that about 21:15, you know how women are. We'll be in

Holodeck 3, and Captain, we've been asked to wear a tux. Deanna said it's a

20th Century dinner club. Sort of like the club in your Dixon Hill

program," he added.

"Very well then," Picard said. "I'll see you there at 21:15."

With a nod, Riker left the ready room. He just hoped that this wasn't going

to blow up in their faces.

When Beverly entered the holodeck, Will and Deanna were already seated,

talking quietly with Vic. A band was playing softly on the stage.

As she approached the table, Will and Vic stood, the latter taking her hand

and kissing it gently. "Beverly, you look lovely," he stately softly.

"Please," he continued, pulling out a chair next to him, "have a seat."

Will tilted his head and grinned at Deanna. He had to admit, Vic was

smooth, especially for a hologram, a fact that he had to remind himself was

a secret.

"Thank you," Beverly said with a smile. "And I must say that the two of you

are looking very handsome this evening yourselves," nodding to Vic and then

to Riker before taking the seat she was offered.

The four of them talked casually for a few minutes, Vic telling them the

latest news from DS9 and the people he had met there.

Riker was amazed at the complexity of this character. He was telling

stories about the adventures on the station as if he were a real person and

had really developed a relationship with the crew there.

When the band started a new song, Vic looked over to Beverly. "Would you

care to dance," he stated softly.

"I'd love to," she said smiling, amazed a little at how comfortable she

still felt with someone she hardly knew.

After the couple walked to the dance floor. Riker leaned over to Deanna.

"Are you sure this is a good idea, Deanna?" he said, concern evident in his

voice. "I mean, Beverly doesn't know he is a hologram. I don't want her to

get hurt. What if she starts getting a little "too attached" to Vic?

They're dancing awfully close."

Deanna smiled to herself. She had to admit. They did look quite

comfortable together.

"I don't think we have to worry about that Will. Vic told me that Beverly

had made it quite clear to him that she didn't want a relationship with him,

other than friendship."

Will sighed in relief. "Well, you wouldn't know it to look at them."

"I know. Isn't it wonderful? If only the Captain could see them together

like this. Maybe it would shake some sense into him."

"Well, don't look now," Will added. "But I think the "shaking" is about to

begin."

Deanna looked casually toward the holodeck entrance. Picard was standing at

the door and his eyes were clearly on the dancing couple.

After a moment, he shook himself and searched the room, looking for the

familiar faces of Riker and Troi.

"Captain," Will said after standing to gain Picard's attention.

Picard saw his first officer and counselor at a table across the room and

went to join them.

"Glad you could join us, Sir," Deanna said as he approached the table.

"Please, have a seat."

"Thank you Counselor," he said as he sat down next to Riker. Picard looked

back to the dance floor. When he realized he had been staring for several

moments, he turned back toward the seated couple and cleared his throat.

"So what's the occasion, Number One?"

"Oh, nothing special Captain." Riker's mind was racing to come up with an

acceptable lie. "Just friends getting together."

"I see," Picard said, careful to hide his surprise from Deanna. Perhaps, he

thought, Riker wasn't ready to speak in front of her. "Well," he said,

taking a glass of wine that a waiter had placed in front of him. "Then

here's to friendship."

Will looked quickly at Deanna and then to Picard. "Right, to friendship,"

he said as they all raised their glasses.

"Speaking of friends, Captain, I don't think you've met our host, Vic

Fontaine. He's over there with Beverly," she said casually point over to

the dancing couple, as though she thought Picard had not noticed them. "He

uses the holodeck program to recreate 1960's Las Vegas. He also sings in

the band. He's really quite talented."

"So I can see," Picard said grimly as he looked directly at the couple. The

tone of his voice was not lost on Deanna and she bit her lip to fight back a

smile. "I wasn't aware that any new entertainers had boarded the ship."

"Oh, he just showed up earlier today," Deanna said, trying not to smile.

"I'm sure he's all right Captain. I know he performed for quite a while on

Deep Space Nine. Worf even recommended him."

"Indeed," he said, not taking his eyes off the dancing couple. "Well, my

former security officer's tastes have certainly changed since he left the

Enterprise. I didn't realize he enjoyed this type of music. It seems a

little 'tame' for a Klingon."

"Oh, I don't really think it was the music that attracted him, Captain. I

think it was the atmosphere Vic creates here. Now, how did Worf put it?"

Deanna paused a moment, choosing her words carefully to add the desired

effect. "Oh, yes, I remember, he said it was almost as romantic as seeing

Klingon opera for the first time."

Picard raised his eyebrows and stared at the Counselor for a moment. He

couldn't remember when he had ever heard the words "romantic" and "Klingon"

in the same sentence. "Really, Counselor? I don't think I've ever thought

of Worf as being a romantic," he said with a smile.

"Don't let that cool, Klingon facade fool you, Captain," Will chimed in.

"When I served on that Klingon warbird a few years ago, I heard tales from

some of the women that would make your hair curl." He paused a moment as he

saw the Captain's gaze turn sharply towards him. He cleared his

throat and

added uneasily, "Uh, no offense, Sir."

Picard smiled slightly despite himself at his First Officer's slight

discomfort. "None taken, Number One."

Deanna chose this opportunity to add more fuel to the Captain's fire.

"Well, there is more to Worf than meets the eye, but I'll have to admit I

was a little surprised myself when Worf suggested that I introduce Vic to

Beverly." She took a drink of her wine before continuing. The comment had

it's desired effect. The wave of emotions that she felt from the Captain

were unmistakable. "I guess he is more of a romantic than even I gave him

credit for."

"They do seem to be hitting it off pretty well, don't they?" Riker added

innocently to Deanna.

Picard's eyes were no longer on his companions at the table. They were

again glued to the dance floor. After a moment, he turned back to Troi and

Riker, his captain's mask firmly in place.

"Well, I for one, am looking forward to meeting our host. He sounds like a

fascinating fellow. Tell me Deanna, how long is scheduled to stay aboard

the Enterprise?" Picard asked.

"I'm not really sure, Captain. I think he was at Deep Space Nine for

several months. I guess, he'll stay as long as he crew continues to enjoy

his show. From what I understand, he's alone and just goes wherever people

ask for him."

"So, he didn't bring his family aboard the ship?" Picard asked.

"No, I don't think he has a family, Captain. At least, Worf didn't mention

one." Deanna paused for a moment and then grinned, raising her eyebrows a

little as she looked at the dancing couple. "He's certainly not acting like

he has a wife and kids stowed away somewhere."

Picard's eyes turned back to the dance floor. He understood Deanna's

meaning. Over the last few minutes, he could have sworn that the

temperature aboard the ship had risen ten degrees.

Vic held Beverly close in his arms as the two floated with the music. They

occasionally smiled at each other, but rarely talked except to compliment

each other on their dancing.

"You really are very good," Vic stated softly.

Beverly blushed at the comment and smiled sweetly at him.

"Thank you," she said. "You're not so bad yourself."

"Ahhh, but I do this for a living. I mean, I'm an entertainer. I'm

supposed to be suave and debonair," he smiled at his own joke.

"Well, Mr. Fontaine," she laughed lightly. "You're very good at your job."

"Thank you, my lady," he said, overacting a little and bowing his head

slightly.

Again she chuckled lightly.

"You really know how to sweep a girl off her feet, don't you?"

"Of course," he smiled. "What can I say? It's a gift." He paused for a

moment and looked deeply in her eyes. "Too bad all of this charm is wasted

on someone whose heart is already taken."

Beverly smiled sweetly back at him and kissed him lightly on the cheek.

"Thank you."

"For what, being a good loser," he laughed lightly.

"No," she said, "for being a good friend."

"My pleasure. You're a fascinating woman, Beverly Crusher. I think that

Captain of yours must be a fool."

He paused for a moment, looked over toward their table and smiled.
"Speak

of the devil. Don't look now, but I think we're being watched."

Beverly's heart nearly stopped when she glanced over at the table and saw

three sets of eyes looking their way when she only expected two.
She

quickly faced Vic again and tried to continue smiling. Vic noticed her

stiffening in his arms and held her tighter to support her as they continued

to dance.

"Maybe you'd like to sit down," he said gently.

"No," she countered quickly, looking over to a set of glass doors nearby.

"Uh... where do those go?"

"To a balcony and a small bar," he answered.

"Good. I think I could use a drink right now."

"Your wish is my command," he said gallantly and glided her through the

doorway and out of the Captain's sight.

Back at the table, Picard's stomach was doing flip-flops. He was doing his

best not to react to what he had just witnessed on the dance floor.
He

couldn't believe what was happening. Good God, he thought, Beverly had only

known this man for a matter of minutes. He noticed her blush in his arms as

they spoke softly, dancing so close to the music. And then she had actually

kissed him before she allowed him to whisk her away to what he guessed must

be a more private location.

From his seat, Picard strained his neck to see what lay past the doorway.

He could see a little corner of what seemed to be a bar. He turned back

toward Riker and Troi and forced a smile.

"You know, Number One, this was a wonderful idea, having dinner together.

We should do it more often. Too bad some of the other crew couldn't have

joined us."

"Oh, we invited some of the other senior staff, Captain. Data and Geordie

may be joining us later and we asked Beverly, but, well, you see, I think

she had other plans," Deanna said, acting a little uncomfortable for his

benefit.

"Yes, I see. Well, I think I'll get another drink while we wait for Mr.

Data and LaForge," he said, smiling and trying to act as casual as possible.

"Could I get you two anything," he added as he rose from his chair.

"No, Sir. We're fine," Riker replied quickly, holding his breath to keep

from laughing. "You go ahead."

After Picard was out of site, the two officers looked at each other and

nearly fell out of their chairs.

When Picard made his way past the doorway, he could see the two of them

leaning against the far side of the balcony. Beverly had her back to him,

her head resting on Vic's shoulder as he spoke to her softly. Vic saw the

Captain enter the room out of the corner of his eye and slowly placed his

right hand on Beverly's back, caressing it gently.

Beverly had been completely taken off guard by seeing Picard at the table,

so soon after discussing her feelings with Vic. The drink Vic had given her

helped, but she was still a little shaky and appreciated Vic's support and

understanding.

She looked up at him and smiled sadly. "I seem to keep thanking you," she

said as she placed her right hand gently on Vic's cheek.

Knowing that Picard was watching them intently, Vic looked directly into

Beverly's eyes. "Do you trust me?" She nodded. With that, he enveloped

her in his arms and kissed her passionately. When the kiss ended, Beverly

was too dumbfounded to say anything. She just stared at him blankly. Vic

smiled warmly back at her for a moment and then motioned with his eyes for

her to look toward the doorway. The sight of the quickly approaching

Captain made her breath catch in her throat. "Jean-Luc," she gasped. "I

didn't know you were standing there."

"Obviously," Picard spoke between his clinched teeth. Then with a forced

smile he continued. "I just came in to get a drink. You must be

Mr.

Fontaine. I've heard so much about you."

"Yes," Beverly was stammering, "Vic, this is Jean-Luc ... Captain ...

Captain Picard."

"Well, Beverly's told me so much about you Captain," Vic replied, extending

his hand. "It's very nice to meet you finally."

"Likewise, I'm sure, Vic," Picard answered, making sure to use the man's

first name as Beverly had before. Stiffly, Picard took the man's extended

hand. "So, Vic, when did you come on board?"

"Oh, just earlier today, Captain. I just popped in from Deep Space Nine. I

think you know some people over there, don't you? I must say, you have a

fine ship." Vic looked directly at Beverly and smiled. "And an even a

finer crew. Everyone has made me feel very welcomed."

She returned the smile.

"Yes," Picard stated calmly and looked at Beverly. "We have a very friendly

crew."

Beverly recognized a tinge of jealousy in Picard's manner. The thought

amused her. It serves him right, she thought.

Back at the table, Troi and Riker were becoming concerned that neither of

their friends had returned from the balcony.

"What do you think is going on out there?" Riker asked.

"I don't know, Will. They've been out there for a long time. Maybe you

should go check on them. I felt the Captain was pretty upset when he left."

"I think you're right. Don't give away my seat, okay?" Will grinned and

kissed Deanna lightly on the cheek before rising from the table and heading

for the balcony doors.

As he entered the bar area, Will could see the three of them standing near

the balcony. As he walked up to them, Beverly snaked her arm around Vic's

waist.

"Well, Captain," Beverly said with a smile. "You do expect us to be

courteous to our guests, don't you?"

"I'd expect nothing less, Doctor," he replied with an equally challenging

smile.

Vic could see trouble was brewing between the two and was happy to see Riker

approach the group. Riker didn't miss the tension between the Captain and

Beverly. Perhaps, he thought, he should get Beverly out of there before one

of them said something they shouldn't.

"Captain, I see you've met our host," Riker stated when he joined them.

"Yes, indeed, Number One. Mr. Fontaine and I were just getting to know one

another."

"Well, don't let me interrupt. I was just wondering if Beverly would like

to dance," Will stated as he bowed slightly in her direction.

Beverly smiled mischievously at the suggestion. "As long as you don't mind,

Vic?" she asked innocently.

"No, go ahead. Just save me a dance for later," Vic replied.

With that, Beverly leaned toward Vic and kissed him on the cheek before

taking Will's offered arm and being led toward the dance floor.

The two men watched as Beverly and Will left the balcony.

Vic turned back toward Picard and motioned toward the bar. "So, would you

like a drink, Captain?"

Picard smiled slightly at Vic for a moment. This could be an interesting

conversation, he thought. "Of course," he answered.

"What's your poison?"

"Scotch, neat," the Captain replied, smiling slightly at Vic's choice of

words.

Vic leaned over to the bartender. "Make that two." After receiving their

drinks, he handed one to Picard. The two men leaned slightly against the

bar and studied each other for a moment, each waiting for the other to make

their next move. Vic decided to take the chance.

"Your doctor is a lovely woman," he stated.

"Indeed she is. We've been friends for a long time."

"Friends? Really? I thought perhaps there was more to it than that," Vic

stated flatly.

Picard was amazed at the man's directness. He couldn't quite understand it,

but despite the previous tension of the situation, Picard no longer felt as

threatened by him.

"And what would make you think that?" he asked.

"Oh, I don't know. I guess I'm just a little surprised that someone else

hasn't snatched her up by now."

Picard studied him for a moment. If Fontaine wasn't pulling any punches,

neither would he, he thought.

"Is that what you intend to do, 'snatch her up'?" he asked.

Vic smiled. "When a fruit is ripe for the picking, it's a shame to let it

stay on the vine."

"So, you plan to try your hand at a little gardening?" Picard couldn't help

but smile a little at his own choice of words, despite the implications.

Vic chuckled at the question.

"It's a tempting idea, Captain, but if there's one thing you learn in show

business, it's you never go where you're not welcomed."

Picard raised an eyebrow. "You looked pretty welcomed a few minutes ago,"

he replied.

Vic smiled and looked down at his drink. "Beverly is a nice lady, but I

knew from the start that I didn't stand a ghost of a chance with her." Vic

paused and looked directly at Picard. "Or haven't you figured that out yet,

Captain?"

Picard stared back at him. "I don't know if I understand your full

meaning."

Vic shook his head. These people are really dense, he thought. "Why am I

not surprised?" he said aloud. "You people don't get out much, do you?"

Picard gazed at him with a confused look on his face.

"Never mind. Look, Captain. How can I put this so you will understand?"

He paused for a moment. "Beverly's off the market."

The look he received from Picard was more confused than before.

"You still don't get it, do you? Let me spell it out for you. It's kinda

hard to woo a lady whose already in love with someone else," he

said

impatiently.

Picard still didn't say anything. He just stared at Vic for a moment.
Vic

decided there was no longer any use beating around the bush.

"Oh, come on, Captain, wake up! The lady's nuts about you. And don't tell

me you don't feel the same way."

Picard looked down at his near empty glass. "I'm sure you're mistaken, Mr.

Fontaine."

"Mistaken? You gotta be kidding me. A blind man could see it with a cane!"

Picard didn't respond, so Vic continued.

"Look, Captain. She's out there on the dance floor with Will. Why don't

you just go out there and tell her how you feel?"

Picard sighed. "I've done that before," he said quietly.

"And what happened?"

"She walked out on me," he replied.

"And?" Vic inquired.

"And nothing. We remained friends, nothing more. That was four years

ago."

"Four years! Well, maybe you should have gone after her. Maybe, you should

go after her now. A lot of things can happen in four years, ya know. A lot

of things can change. What have you got to lose, that is, if you're still

interested?"

Vic paused for a moment to study the Captain. He had done all he could, he

decided. It was now up to them. He stood up from the barstool.

"Life's too short, Captain. Don't waste any more of it."

Vic looked over toward the balcony door just as Riker and Beverly were

returning from the dance floor. He motioned with his eyes to the returning

couple.

"Well, Captain?" Vic continued, not sure if he had gotten through to him or

not. "I think we have business to take care of, don't you?" Beverly and

Riker joined them at the bar.

"It's time for my next set. Beverly, I'll see you later."

Vic quickly kissed Beverly on the cheek and gave Picard a challenging look

as he passed him and made his way out the door. Will quickly made an excuse

about leaving Deanna alone for so long and was gone before anyone could say

a word.

Beverly was a little uneasy by their sudden departures and looked at Picard

shyly.

"Well, it looks like we've been deserted."

"It would seem so," he said. "Would you like to go back and join the

others?"

"No, this is fine. It was getting a little crowded on the dance floor

anyway."

He motioned her over to a barstool and she sat down as he took up a place

standing next to her, leaning slightly against the bar.

Beverly was beginning to get nervous at her closeness to Jean-Luc. She

wondered what he and Vic had been discussing in her absence. Jean-Luc

seemed much more comfortable with the situation than when she had left with

Will for the dance.

"Would you like something to drink?" he asked.

"Sure. A white wine would be nice," she answered. Picard got the

attention of the bartender and ordered her drink, placing his own on the bar

next to them.

"Your new friend is an interesting fellow."

"Yes, he is," she said, smiling mischievously. "Very interesting, and very

charming."

"Hmm. A little forward thought, don't you think? I mean, you hardly know

him Beverly."

Beverly flashed him a brilliant smile. "Why, Jean-Luc, if I didn't know any

better, I'd say you were jealous."

"I am NOT jealous. I'm just saying that you really don't know anything

about him. I can't put my finger on it, but there's something "unnatural"

about him."

"Well, I think he's very natural," Beverly countered. "And a VERY good

dancer."

Picard knitted his brow and stared at her. "Hmm. You can't be serious?"

"You ARE jealous!"

"I am not! I just don't want you to get hurt."

Beverly was beginning to get angry. What did he have to be jealous about,

she thought to herself. He was the one gallivanting around on Ba'ku a few

months before. She turned away from him and started to get up from her

seat.

"Well don't worry, Captain. Vic would never hurt me. We know just where we

stand with each other, unlike some people I know."

"And what the hell is that supposed to mean?" Picard spat out.

She gazed at him angrily, got up from the barstool and tried to walk away.

He grabbed her arm.

"Let me go, Jean-Luc," she said firmly, trying to break his grasp.

He held her firm and set his jaw. "No. I won't let you go, not this time.

Not until you hear what I have to say."

She gazed at him defiantly for a moment, but sat back down on the stool.

"Beverly, please." He took a deep breath and let it out. After a second,

he lessened his hold on her, his hand now laying gently on her forearm.

"I'm sorry. Forgive me." He took another deep breath and continued.
"I AM

your friend, Beverly. Don't go. Please."

For a moment, the two were silent. Jean-Luc tried to catch her gaze, but

she refused to look at him. Tears were forming in her eyes.

"Beverly, please," he pleaded again softly. "Look at me." Slowly, he

traced his hand up her arm and placed it under her chin, gently raising her

face to look in her eyes.

When she didn't resist him, the look in her eyes nearly shattered his heart.

A single tear had escaped from her eyes and traced down her cheek. The

anger in her eyes was gone. In its place, Jean-Luc saw uncertainty and

pain. He took his thumb and gently wiped the tear from her cheek.

"What do you want from me, Jean-Luc?" she pleaded.

The question momentarily stunned him. What did he want? Seeing Beverly in

the arms of another man had brought back emotions that he thought were long

since buried. He had loved her from the first moment he laid eyes on her.

He still loved her, he realized, more than life itself. The realization

turned his mind to clay and he couldn't form the words to tell her.

His silence and stunned look brought her anger back to the surface.

"That's what I thought," she said, turning away from him to walk away again.

But he couldn't let her leave. Not again. "Beverly, wait, please."

He had taken her arm again in his hand to hold her steady. His emotions

were too close to the surface for him to speak the words in his heart.

"Jean-Luc, I'm getting tired of this game of yours. So let's just call it a

night, all right, before one of us says something that we'll regret."

"Wait! Please," he pleaded as he searched her eyes for a moment. "Dance

with me?" he asked gently.

"What?" she answered shakily. "Jean-Luc, I don't think . . ."

He cut her off. "Please. I don't want you to leave. Just one dance?"

She stopped for a moment and looked slowly into his eyes. What she saw

there made her heart nearly stop.

Slowly, she raised her right arm and placed it over his shoulder, her

fingers resting on the back of his neck. He released her other arm and took

her left hand in his. She rested her head on his shoulder, just under his

chin.

Through the open balcony doors, they could hear the gentle music playing as

a man's voice began to caress the song. It was Vic.

As they began to sway to the music, Beverly's body relaxed for the first

time since she had spotted him on the balcony and she leaned in slowly

against him.

Picard smiled at the gesture and closed his eyes for a moment. How he had

longed to have this woman in his arms again, holding her close. Neither

spoke for several minutes as they danced to the old melody.

Picard broke the silence as he pulled back to look in her eyes, still moist

from the earlier tears.

"Beverly, I'm sorry. I ...", he spoke, but was silenced by Beverly gently

placing her fingers on his lips.

"Jean-Luc, don't." She smiled softly at him. "No more apologies tonight.

Just hold me."

He kissed the fingers that still lingered on his lips and took her hand

gently back in his own. He could see the love in her eyes and, for the

first time in his life, knew that it was only there for him.

Slowly, he leaned in to brush his lips gently with hers. The kiss grew in

its intensity with each beat of the soft music that flowed around them.

Pulling back slowly, he looked again in her still moist eyes and spoke

hoarsely.

"I love you, Beverly. I always have."

Tears anew began to form in her eyes as she began to comprehend the words

that she had so longed to hear.

"I love you, too, Jean-Luc." She smiled gently as she spoke. "I think it's

time for us to go home."

He pulled her in again for another kiss, this one filled with the promise of

wonderful things to come.

THE END

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